

COUNCIL ON AGING REPORT: This request is submitted to meet the need for enhanced audio-visual equipment to address the special needs of the users of the Senior Center program spaces at the new Fairbank Community Center. The capability of the equipment contemplated by this request was not part of the request approved by the Town at its 2022 Annual Town Meeting. At the time that Article was brought forth, the narrative for that proposal provided minimum ADA (Americans with Disability Act) and MAAB (Massachusetts Architectural Access Board) compliance, but did not address all of the requests of the users. Specifically, it did not include Assisted Listening Systems, speech enhancement systems, or hybrid remote learning AV systems in all program rooms that support Senior Center programming. The contemplated equipment will enhance the ability of all patrons to hear and be heard within a given program space, with special emphasis on the hearing impaired, will enhance the availability of, and interaction with, virtual and remote programming for all patrons of the Senior Center, and will enable persons unable to attend programming at the Senior Center to interactively participate in programming originating at, or transmitted through, the Senior Center. The capability of the enhanced equipment will expand the availability and participation of residents in our community unable to attend programs in person and make for a more welcoming Senior Center for all residents. In addition to the equipment needed, approved funds will be used for necessary redesign services and the installation of the systems ordered. The best time to install these systems is now, as the building is under construction. To wait will likely result in higher costs and unnecessary disruption of programming at the Senior Center.